

## Emergency by rosabelle

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**Summary:**

"I've been thinking," Dustin said. "The Snow Ball just wasn't my time, you know? But that was last year. I'm a new man now. Things are really going to start looking up."

"Right," Steve said. "Good for you. So what's the problem?"

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## Author's Note:

- For [Sholio](#).

He was almost asleep when the pebble clinked against his window. The sound of the first one he absorbed sleepily but when another followed after, Steve Harrington jerked out of his doze and lurched upright in bed.

Nancy?

He shoved the comforters to the side and almost tripped over the hem of his sheet as he stumbled towards the window. Outside, it was still. It had snowed lightly the evening before, just enough that the yards were dusted with a fine white blanket. Almost all of the yards, anyway. The snow on his front lawn had been disturbed and tromped across, and there was a bicycle leaning against the trunk of their tree.

Not Nancy, then. He should know better, by now. She'd be spending her Saturday nights with Jonathan.

Steve frowned at the bike, then followed the trunk upwards with his eyes—only to leap back when he realized there was someone sitting on one of the branches.

The figure grinned at him, and waved.

What the fuck.

Steve opened the window.

"Hi, friend."

"You could've knocked," Steve said. "My parents are out of town. Or called. Are you out of your damn mind?"

"My mom's been on the phone for hours," Dustin told him, unrepentant. "It couldn't wait anymore. It's an emergency."

The last time the little shit had an emergency, Steve had gotten the crap kicked out of him and then all of his little shit friends had fucking kidnapped him, and then to top it all off they'd all been almost eaten by those faceless dog lizards.

Still. The kid shouldn't be sitting on a tree branch in the snow. Resigned, Steve stepped back, and let Dustin scoot forward and drop into his bedroom. He shook off his coat of snow all over the goddamned floor.

"An emergency, huh?" He mimed swinging a baseball bat. He'd taken to keeping it in the trunk of his car. Just in case.

"Slow down, buddy," Dustin cautioned him, adjusting the brim of his cap. "It's not that kind of emergency."

"Oh." Steve ran a hand through his hair. "Why are you here, again?"

"I've been thinking," Dustin said. "The Snow Ball just wasn't my time, you know? But that was last year. I'm a new man now. Things are really going to start looking up."

"Right," Steve said. "Good for you. So what's the problem?"

"The Happy Hearts Hop is this week," Dustin explained. "I thought I'd try, you know, like a new look, but the barber took too much off the top, and—"

He grimaced, and pulled off his cap.

"Oh," Steve said, wincing. He couldn't lie. "Yeah. That's unfortunate."

The effect wasn't helped any by having been flattened to his head by the cap, but Dustin's curls were disturbingly straight in a way that made them look like someone else's hair had been badly glued to the sides of his head. Where his bangs should be, it looked like his hair had been gnawed off by one of those demodog things.

"Did you know I had so much forehead?" Dustin looked at him almost accusingly, like this whole debacle was somehow Steve's fault. "I didn't."

"Can't they fix it?" he asked, though he couldn't imagine how.

"If I the rest of shaved my head, maybe," Dustin said glumly.

"You've just got to work with it, then," Steve said. "Act like you did it on purpose. No one will know."

"Act like you don't care?" Dustin gave him a skeptical look. "Again, really?"

"Hey. Stick with what works, you know?"

"If it works so well, why are we both single?"

"Well, if I give such shit advice, what are you doing here in the middle of the night, huh?" Steve crossed his arms.

Dustin just grinned at him. Dickhead.

Steve sighed. "Maybe we can... I don't know. Gel or something. There's plenty left on the sides. We could just... borrow some of that for the middle here. Let me think. When's the dance, again?"

"Thursday."

"That's almost a week away." Steve hoped he sounded confident. "We'll figure something out by then."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah." Maybe his grandma still had that collection of wigs she'd kept in the grandkids' dress-up closet. "You'll be knocking 'em dead by then."

Dustin ran his fingers through his mangled hair, and grinned again.

"And, uh... look, man," Steve said. "If that doesn't pan out, you could stop by here. We'll have a guys' night. Go see a movie or something."

Bad hair or no, Dustin's romantic prospects were looking better than his, these days.

"Yeah?" Dustin looked surprised. "No big Valentine's plans for King

Steve?"

"King Steve is a gentleman who doesn't talk about his business with twelve-year-olds," he said. "And don't call me that."

"Aye, Your Majesty." He even bowed, the little shit.

"But," Steve admitted. "I'm as single as you are, right now. It's just a temporary thing. It's actually kind of nice, you know? I can do what I want."

"Right." Dustin looked unconvinced.

"No," Steve said. "Remember what we decided?"

"No more dates," Dustin said grudgingly. "I know."

The kids had already set him up with three former babysitters and a neighbor's cousin.

"Anyway," Steve said. "Go home and wash out whatever's in your hair, okay? Come over in the morning and we'll see what we can do."

"Okay." Dustin crammed his cap back on his head. "Hey, me and the others were going to go see *The Dungeonmaster*, but you could come with us. Or we could go see it next weekend."

Steve had never heard of *The Dungeonmaster*, and he knew enough by now to be suspect of Dustin's taste. "Sounds... awful."

"It's got great reviews," Dustin assured him. That sounded like a lie. "I'll tell you all about it in the morning, okay?"

"Okay." Steve was going to spend Valentine's Day watching this movie. He could already tell that was how it was going to play out, and he guessed it was (maybe, depending on how bad of a movie it really was) better than staying at home moping about Nancy. "You do that."